

Story #478 (Tape #11, 1970)

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The Livestock of the Mystic Dervish

There was once a mystic poet named Dertli<sup>1</sup> who lived in a village. The people of that village were going up to their yayla<sup>2</sup> for the summer. Dertli said to his wife, "Let us also go up to the yayla."

His wife said, "But we have no animals like those of the other people. We have neither oxen nor donkeys. What would we do up there?"

"Never mind," answered Dertli. "Let us maintain the harmony of the village and go up there like everyone else."

When the people saw them arriving at the yayla, they all laughed, for Dertli and his wife really had no reason to be there. Nevertheless, they went to the yayla. And, lo! while they were there, herds of deer came from the forest to Dertli and stood patiently to be milked.

<sup>1</sup>Dertli was a local saint or evliya from the nearby kaza of Gerede.

<sup>2</sup>A yayla is a summer pasture in the mountains to which people take their flocks to graze. Many villages are completely emptied when the time comes to take the sheep, goats, cows, and draft animals to the yayla. This practice preserves a semi-nomadic status for many Turkish villagers.